

(c) Documents shall be dated and state the title of the proceeding and, except initial petitions, the docket number. Any pleading or other document required by order of the presiding officer to be filed by a specified date, shall be delivered to the Docket Clerk on or before such date. The date of filing shall be entered thereon by the Docket Clerk.

§ 959.10 Default.

(a) If the respondent fails to file an answer within the time specified in the notice of hearing, he shall be deemed in default and to have waived hearing and further procedural steps. The Judicial Officer shall thereafter issue an order without further notice to the respondent.

(b) If the respondent files an answer but fails to appear at the hearing, the presiding officer shall receive petitioner's evidence and render an initial decision.

§ 959.11 Amendment of pleadings.

(a) Amendments proposed prior to the hearing shall be filed with the Docket Clerk. Amendments proposed thereafter shall be filed with the presiding officer.

(b) By consent of the parties, a pleading may be amended at any time. Also, a party may move to amend a pleading at any time prior to the close of the hearing and, provided that the amendment is reasonably within the scope of the proceeding initiated by the petition, the presiding officer shall make such ruling on the motion as he deems fair and equitable to the parties.

(c) When issues not raised by the pleadings, but reasonably within the scope of the proceedings initiated by the petition, are tried by express or implied consent of the parties, they shall be treated in all respects as if they had been raised in the pleadings. Such amendments as may be necessary to make the pleadings conform to the evidence, and to raise such issues, shall be allowed at any time upon the motion of any party.

(d) If a party objects to the introduction of evidence at the hearing on the ground that it is not within the issues made by the pleadings, but fails to satisfy the presiding officer that an

amendment of the pleadings would prejudice him on the merits, the presiding officer may allow the amendment and may grant a continuance to enable the objecting party to rebut the evidence presented.

(e) The presiding officer may, upon reasonable notice and upon such terms as are just, permit service of supplemental pleadings setting forth transactions, occurrences, or events which have happened since the date of the pleading sought to be supplemented and which are relevant to any of the issues involved.

§ 959.12 Continuances and extensions.

Continuances and extensions will not be granted by the presiding officer except for good cause found.

§ 959.13 Hearings.

Hearings are held at the headquarters of the Postal Service, Washington, DC 20260, or other locations designated by the presiding officer.

§ 959.14 Change of place of hearings.

Not later than the date fixed for the filing of the answer, a party may file a written request that a hearing be held at a place other than that designated in the notice. He shall support his request with a statement outlining:

(a) The evidence to be offered in such place;

(b) The names and addresses of the witnesses who will testify; and,

(c) The reasons why such evidence cannot be produced at Washington, D.C. The presiding officer shall give consideration to the convenience and necessity of the parties and the relevancy of the evidence to be offered.

§ 959.15 Appearances.

(a) A respondent may appear and be heard in person or by attorney.

(b) An attorney may practice before the Postal Service in accordance with the rules in part 951 of this title.

(c) When a respondent is represented by an attorney, all pleadings and other papers subsequent to the initial petition shall be mailed to the attorney.

(d) A respondent must promptly file a notice of change of attorney.